

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2254

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 15205

LIMDIS

FOLLOWING TEL SENT NEW DELHI FROM BOMBAY NOV 14, 1975,  
REPEATED TO YOU. QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOMBAY 2874

LIMDIS

FOR SCHNEIDER FROM COURTNEY

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: TGEN, OTRA, IN

SUBJ: VISIT BY US NUCLEAR PHYSICAL SECURITY TEAM

REF: NEW DELHI 14948

1. SUMMARY. BOMBAY/TARAPUR PHASE OF VISIT OF PHYSICAL SECURITY TEAM WENT OFF VERY WELL. IAEC CHAIRMAN SETHNA LED DISCUSSIONS PERSONALLY AND SEEMED VERY PLEASED WITH TEAM'S FINDINGS. SCHEDULE INCLUDED ALL ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES TEAM WISHED TO OBSERVE. INDIAN OFFICIALS OPEN AND FRIENDLY IN DISCUSSIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. ERDA/NRC PHYSICAL SECURITY TEAM COMPLETED BOMBAY-TARAPUR PHASE OF ITS VISIT AFTERNOON NOV 13 AND LEFT FOR ONE-DAY VISIT TO URANIUM HSIAFLORIDE CONVERSION FACILITY AT HYDERABAD.  
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SCHEDULE SET FORTH IN DEPTTEL 260141, AS AMENDED BY BOMBAY'S 2805 REPEATED AS NEW DELHI 14723, FULLY MET. INDIAN OFFICIALS WERE OPEN, FRIENDLY AND CORDIAL DURING ALL PARTS OF VISIT AND WERE OBVIOUSLY UNDER INSTRUCTIONS FROM IAEC CHAIRMAN SETHNA

TO HAVE TEAM VIEW THE FULL RANGE OF ACTIVITIES WHERE PHYSICAL SECURITY COULD BE A PROBLEM, INCLUDING FUEL REPROCESSING AND STORAGE FACILITIES UNDER CONSTRUCTION AT TARAPUR.

3. SETHNA CLEARLY WANTED A FULL AND OPEN DISCUSSION ON ALL ASPECTS OF PHYSICAL SECURITY PROBLEM. HE CHAIRED BOTH DISCUSSION SESSIONS AND ADVANCED WHAT OTEN SEEMED TO BE AN ENDLESS STREAM OF QUESTIONS ABOUT SECURITY THAT WENT WELL BEYOND PHYSICAL ASPECTS OF THIS PROBLEM INTO SUCH AREAS AS ACCOUNTABILITY AND MEASUREMENT PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH KEEPING TABS ON SENSITIVE MATERIALS.

4. DURING DISCUSSIONS NUMEROUS REQUESTS CAME FROM INDIAN PARTICIPANTS FOR WRITTEN MATERIAL REGARDING U.S. METHODS FOR DEALING WITH PHYSICAL SECURITY ACCOUNTABILITY AND MEASUREMENT PROBLEMS. AFTER FIRST DAY'S MEETING, TEAM COMPILED NAD LATER GAVE TO CHAIRMAN SETHNA A LIST OF MATERIALS THEY WILL ENDEAVOR TO PUT TOGETHER AND SEND TO HIM. HE SEEMED SATISFIED WITH LISTING. NEED FOR SOME OF THIS MATERIAL IS URGENT AS IT RELATES TO POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS IN FACILITIES CURRENTLY UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN TARAPUR.

5. SETHNA IS NOW RECONSIDERING HIS INITIAL INTENTION TO SEND A SINGLE INDIAN TECHNICIAN TO U.S. AS NEXT PHASE OF INTERCHANGE ON PHYSICAL SECURITY. HE SEEMS TO BE CONTEMPLATING A DIFFERENT TYPE THAN THE ELECTRONICS SPECIALIST ORIGINALLY ENVISAGED AND HE MAY ALSO DECIDE TO ADD ANOTHER SPECIALIST TWO TO HIS VISITING GROUP. HE WILL WORK OUT PLANS FOR VISIT TO U.S. THROUGH FURTHER EXCHANGE WITH THARP.

6. AT CLOSING SESSION, IN RESPO YE TO SETHNA'S DIRECT QUERY AS TO HOW TEAM FOUND PHYSICAL SECURITY PROGRAM AND PLANS AT TARAPUR, THARP WAS COMPLIMENTARY OF INDIAN PROGRAM, INDICATING HE WOULD RECOMMEND ONLY A FEW IMPROVEMENTS THAT WOULD CALL FOR REFINEMENT RATHER THAN BASIC CHANGE INSECURITY SYSTEM. SETHNA WAS CLEARLY RELIEVED AND PLEASED TO FIND HE WOULD NOT BE RECEIVING SUGGESTIONS THAT WOULD BE EXPENSIVE OR OTHERWISE CONFIDENTIAL

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DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH. NEVERTHELESS, HE SHOWED GREAT INTEREST IN SUGGESTIONS OUTLINED BY THARP AND INDICATED HE WOULD TRY TO FIND WAYS TO INCORPORATE THEM AT TARAPUR.

7. ONLY MATTER THAT REMAINED IN A SOMEWHAT UNCERTAIN STATUS AT END OF DISCUSSIONS WAS PRECISE FORM OF RESPONSE TO SETHNA'S EXPLICIT REQUEST FOR A REPORT FROM TEAM ON THEIR OBSERVATIONS HERE. WHILE INSISTING ON NEED FOR SOME SORT OF REPORT, SETHNA AVOIDED SEVERAL OPPORTUNITIES TO DEFINE SPECIFICALLY WHAT HE WANTS. HOWEVER, MANY OF HIS REMARKS DURING MEETINGS INDICATE HE IS SEEKING A STATMENT FROM TEAMGIVING ITS VIEW (WHICH ARE FAVORABLE) ON THE ADEQUACYOF THE IAEC'S PHYSICAL SECURITY PROGRAMS AND PLANS. IN MY VIEW, THARP CORRECTLY AVOIDED COMMITTING

HIMSELF TO ANY SPECIFIC TYPE OF REPLY, BUT RIGHTLY INDICATED THAT SETHNA COULD EXPECT TO RECEIVE SOMETHING FROM TEAM RESPONSIVE TO HIS REQUEST.

8. COMMENT:

A. CLEARLY SETHNA HAD INSTRUCTED HIS GROUP TO REFLECT A DEEP INTEREST IN GETTING FROM THEIR AMERICAN VISITORS ANYTHING THAT WOULD BE HELPFUL IN IMPROVING THE PHYSICAL SECURITY PROGRAM. SETHNA HAD HIS TOP HELPERS ON HAND IN GREATER NUMBER AND ON MORE OCCASIONS THAN WERE STRICTLY NECESSARY TO ENSURE TECHNICAL SUCCESS OF THE VISIT. SETHNA HIMSELF GAVE A WORKING LUNCH FOR THE TEAM WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY AT LEAST 25 SENIOR INDIAN NUCLEAR OFFICIALS; IN ADDITION, SETHNA CAME TO THE CONSULATE GENERAL FOR A SMALLER WORKING LUNCH WHICH INCLUDED HIS TOP COLLABORATORS.

B. IN PART, SETHNA'S KEEN ATTENTION TO THIS PROJECT UNDOUBTEDLY STEMS FROM A DESIRE TO ASSEMBLE A DATA BASE WHICH WILL CONVINCINGLY DEMONSTRATE THAT HIS PHYSICAL SECURITY PROGRAMS MEET HIGH STANDARDS. ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, SETHNA OBSERVED THAT HE HAS HIS OWN CRITICS WHO CONSISTENTLY RAISE QUESTIONS REGARDING SAFETY, HAZARD AND SECURITY MATTERS CONNECTED WITH INDIA'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM. HE OBVIOUSLY WOULD LIKE TO PUT HIMSELF IN A POSITION WHERE HE COULD SAY AND IF POSSIBLE DEMONSTRATE THAT A MAJOR NUCLEAR POWER HAS PUT ITS CACHET OF APPROVAL ON HIS PHYSICAL SECURITY PROGRAMS.

C. BUT THIS DOES NOT EXPLAIN WHY HE HAS TURNED TO THE U.S. OR WHY HE EXTENDED SCOPE TO TALKS WITH TEAM TO ASPECTS OF HIS PROGRAM THAT GO WELL BEYOND PHYSICAL SECURITY ITSELF. HE MAY BE SIMPLY TRYING TO MAINTAIN AN ATMOSPHERE THAT PERMITS A CONTINUATION OF CONFIDENTIAL

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THE PRESENT LEVEL OF COOPERATION, E.G., FUEL SUPPLY AND HELP WITH SOME ADVANCED COMPONENTS DIFFICULT OR COSTLY TO FABRICATE IN INDIA. OR HE MAY SIMPLY WANT TO DEMONSTRATE THAT AS ALL ASPECTS OF HIS SECURITY PROGRAM ARE FIRST-CLASS THERE SHOULD BE NO QUESTION THAT HIS TARAPUR REPROCESSING FACILITY IS SUFFICIENTLY SECURE TO WARRANT REPROCESSING SPENT FUEL SUPPLIED BY U.S. WHICH WILL SOON BE NECESSARY. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT HE MAY HAVE MORE AMBITIOUS REQUEST IN MIND AND HE'S SIMPLY TRYING TO IMPROVE ATMOSPHERE FOR LAUNCHING IT.

D. I THOUGHT TEAM DID AN EXCELLENT JOB IN DEALING WITH SETHNA, WHO IS NOT ALL THAT EASY IN SPITE OF HIS OPENNESS AND CORDIALITY ON THIS OCCASION. HIS WIDE-RANGING CURIOSITY GIVES RISE TO NUMEROUS QUESTIONS THAT REQUIRE QUICK, SKILLFUL RESPONSE. THARP AND HIS ERDA COLLEAGUES, AS WELL AS THE NRC PARTICIPANT R.G. PAGE, GAVE AN EXCELLENT ACCOUNT OF THEMSELVES.

9. RECOMMENDATION - I BELIEVE USG SHOULD GIVE CAREFUL ATTENTION, AS THARP INTENDS, TO TYPE OF COMMUNICATION SENT TO SETHNA REGARDING TEAM'S FINDINGS HERE. SINCE SUBSTANCE WILL BE FAVORABLE TO INDIAN PROGRAM, SETHNA WILL BE VERY TEMPTED TO USE IT DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY IN RESPONDING TO HIS CRITICS.

BOTH TONE AND LEVEL OF ENDORSEMENT IN USG WILL BE IMPORTANT.  
SETHNA WOULD PROBABLY RATE A TRANSMITTAL LETTER SIGNED BY ERDA  
ADMINISTRATOR AT TOP OF HIS SCALE, WHILE A FACTUAL STATEMENT  
TRANSMITTED BY TEAM LEADER WOULD RATE NEAR LOWER END OF SCALE.  
OUR DECISION SHOULD OF COURSE BE BASED ON HOW MUCH ENCOURAGEMENT  
WE WANT TO SHOW IN RESPONSE TO SETHNA'S EMBRACE OF OUR OFFER  
COOPERATE IN PHYSICAL SECURITY FIELD.

10. VREBALOVICH, WHO WAS A FINE ADJUNCT TO TEAM, WILL I  
BELIEVE CONCUR WITH THE GENERAL THRUST OF THESE REMARKS;  
UNFORUNATELY, SEVERAL UNFORESEEN EVENTS IMMEDIATELY BEFORE HIS  
DEPARTURE PREVENTED MY DISCUSSING MESSAGE WITH HIM, AS I  
INTENDED. I AM SENDING SETHNA THANK-YOU NOTES ON BEHALF OF THE  
TEAM.  
COURTNEY UNQUOTE  
SASBE

CONFIDENTIAL

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

## Message Attributes

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